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The Mistletoe

By ROBERTUS LOVE.

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WHEN you step under the sprig of mistletoe hanging from the chandelier to get your Christmas kiss you may not be particularly interested in the genesis of the peculiar little vegetable growth which Cupid seems to have appropriated for his own. Nevertheless the process of mistletoe production and reproduction is highly interesting.

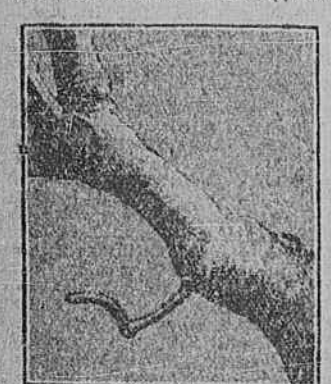
In some parts of England, where most of the mistletoe of Christmas



BERRIES GROWN ON A BRANCH.

time comes from, the gardeners propagate the parasite artificially. Mistletoe, as is well known, is of the parasitic kind, taking its sustenance not from the ground, but from a tree. The apple tree seems to be its favorite, though the hawthorn, the lime and the poplar frequently carry the parasite. The scientific inoculation of trees with the mistletoe growth is practiced with excellent results in the north of England. As a gardener takes between his thumb and forefinger one of the little berries of the mistletoe, crushes it so that its sticky juice oozes out and sticks it upon the surface of a branch of the tree. Usually he selects a young branch, on which the bark is soft and easily penetrable. If an older branch be chosen, the bark is slightly scraped on the surface. The berry is mashed flat against the bark. The seed which it contains is thus held in place by its own gum.

Late April or May is the proper season for inoculating. The seed soon sends through the bark a little "feeler" or root, and a small twig, leading in toward the branch of the tree, appears.



SWELLED BRANCH AND TWIG.

After a considerable period this twig, which looks like a small bushy shoot sticking in the tree from the top of the bark, falls off. The uninformed thinks it is all over, but the experienced gardener knows better. He knows that after a time the branch will begin to swell at the point of inoculation, gradually rising to a little

peak at the place where the hook has been. This tip gets green and shiny, a bud pushes up, and in a few weeks an unmistakable twig of mistletoe is visible, with a stem and a long leaf or two.

After this the mistletoe comes rapidly into its kingdom and takes possession. The close observer will see other little swellings and ponds along the branch, the thin roots of the mistletoe having traveled under the bark to sprout up in fresh places. Thus it travels along until sometimes the whole tree is in its possession; fine bunches of the Christmas hanger growing abundantly.

When once the mistletoe takes possession of a fruit tree the effect upon the fruit is quite noticeable. The mistletoe takes its nourishment from the tree to which it clings. That is the soil in which its roots live and thrive. Naturally this reduces the amount of substance which formerly went into the fruit. If the parasite be an apple tree, the apples become small and scraggly. The mistletoe has stolen away their sweetness and plumpness. Man grows by what he feeds on. So does mistletoe. And as the pork eating man visits the penalty of death upon the pig so does the parasite of withering and scraggy fall upon the apple whose progenitor feeds the spreading parasite. Nature is full of wonders, and the growth of mistletoe is one of the most wonderful when adequately studied.

Mistletoe grows naturally in parts of England and Scotland, being propagated by birds. In some of the northern counties of Scotland no mistletoe is found. This is believed to be due to the absence of the mistle thrush



TWIG AND FIRST BUD BUSTING.

from those counties. The thrush of this name is exceedingly fond of the mistletoe berry. After eating its fill the bird flies to another tree. Being cleanly, it uses the branch of the tree upon which it alights for a parking, wiping its sticky bill thereon. Frequently a mistletoe seed is thus deposited and girded to the bark. Then the reproductive process follows naturally.

An official inquiry as to whether mistletoe is still to be found on oak trees, as in Druidical days, resulted in the discovery of several oaks in one county of England bearing the parasite. But modern mistletoe has come to be Cupid's rather than Druidical. When the mistletoe and the rose, plus the ruber, get in the proper positions the result rhymes with kiss.

Willie's Hot Christmas.

"Well, Willie," said Uncle Ned, who sometimes talked slang, "I suppose you had a hot time on Christmas."

"I sh'd say I did," replied Willie. "Santy Claus filled my socks so full that they fell down into the fireplace and I got up in the night and found my feet there. I do the same thing, an' I got in hands an' arms burned so I had a stay in bed all day, an' then I was felled up for gittin' up so early on Christmas mornin'."

THE AGE OF HAPPINESS.

A Youthful Spirit the Fad of the Day.

The Scheme's Faults.

"What is the age of happiness?" asks a writer in the London Daily Telegraph. "A great man of science," she goes on to say, "has lately declared 'It is belief that pessimism, like measles, is a complaint of youth and a calm joy the characteristic of age. The Women Workers have just been told by Mrs. Creighton that middle age is happier than the springtime of life. And yet there are those who believe that the proper meaning of the adage, 'Those whom the gods love die young' is 'Those whom the gods love never grow old.' Probably this is the common faith. An eternal youthfulness most of us envy and covet. But we should not conceal from ourselves that it can be irritating. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, troubled by a matron who not merely dressed, but talked, like a girl in her teens, said snappishly, as usual, 'It's well enough to be always fifteen, my dear, but need you be five?' We are accustomed to think childlike prettiness and becoming, and enthusiastic persons tell you of this or that sweet woman who still has 'the heart of a child.' But the trouble is that such a creature generally has the brain of a child too. The cultivation of a spirit of youth is one of the most obvious fashions of the day. We have all to be light hearted, careless creatures of impulse, ready to try everything and be friends with every one. If you will not have ten new interests a day you are old fashioned. No wonder nervous diseases are on the increase, for the fact is that most of us are not constructed for this perennial youthfulness. Most of us are intended to acquire a certain sedateness of body and a certain sobriety of mind with advancing years. The effort to avoid these qualities ends in disaster."

LINGERIE CONCEITS.

The Favorite Designs Are the Butterfly and Daisy Patterns.

The new embroidered underwear is made to fit quite closely to the figure, as this season every woman is striving to be as slim as possible. Some of the newest designs for sets of underwear show the hand embroidery alone, no lace being combined with it. However, a narrow frill of lace used under the scallops is more becoming than otherwise. The favorite designs are the butterfly and the daisy patterns. The work is done in the eyelet and French embroidery upon the batiste or handkerchief linen, with the edges finished with buttonhole scallop. The corset cover is perhaps the most important article of the set, as the popular lingerie waists require very attractive corset covers. The corset cover may be made full enough to slip over the head and be drawn up with ribbons run through embroidered oval openings, or it may open in the front or on one side. The corset cover which goes over the head is made in two pieces, with seams under the arms and on the shoulders, while the fullness of the waist line is held in by a ribbon drawn through other a casing of the material or a heading. The corset cover which opens in front can have the fullness at the waist line laid in a cluster of fine hand run tucks and finished with heading and ribbon. The scalloping should be very carefully done. It will be best to fill in the edges of the scallops with an outline stitch. This will help also to keep the material from fraying out when the cover is laundered.

ABOUT THE HOUSE.

A few economical housewives have tried grinding their tea leaves like coffee, and they declare that the result is excellent, only about half the usual quantity being used. Of course the tea strainer must be as fine as can be bought.

In order to be sure that the coconut for pies and candy is perfectly fresh it is well to buy the whole fruit and shred it in the meat chopper.

Just before a meal is served if the dining room atmosphere too plainly foretells what has been prepared open the windows a few seconds and pour a couple of drops of lavender essence into a cup of boiling water. The cooking odor will entirely disappear.

Try mixing mustard with milk instead of with water or vinegar. The flavor is said to be good, the paste is very smooth, and the mustard will not dry so quickly.

In making new pillows have the feathers first inclosed in a bag of cheesecloth or thin muslin. Then at any time the ticking may be removed for washing, and even the feathers may be washed in the inner bag without drying all over the house.

Restoring Woodwork.

Faded spots in hard wood from heat, light or the touch of too strong alkalis can be brought back to their original color by repeated gentle rubbings with boiled lard oil mixed with one-eighth of alcohol. Rub two or three times each day, using a clean silk or linen swab each time. Make swabs by rolling fine cotton batting into tight small balls and tying a ball in a square of cloth. The loose cloth ends form a handle. Throw away swabs as soon as they get hard or dirty.

That Nothing Shall Be Lost.

The country grocer was issuing instructions to his new assistant. "It's only by looking closely after trifles," said the proprietor, "that a profit can be made in these days of close competition."

"Yes, sir," came from the boy.

"For example," continued the grocer, "when you pick the flies out of the sugar don't throw them away. Put 'em among the currants."

A. & P. PURE FOOD DAILY BULLETIN FOR WEEK COMMENCING MONDAY, DECEMBER 16th

IF YOU WANT TO ENJOY A Perfect Christmas Dinner

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 Claret Raisins, a pkgt. 15c
 London Layer Raisins, a lb. 12c
 Citron, a lb. 25c
 Orange Peel, a lb. 15c
 Lemon Peel, a lb. 15c
 Plum Pudding, A. & P., 10, 20 & 40c
 Plum Pudding, R. & R., 23 & 45c
 None Such Mince Meat 9c
 Pitted Dates, a pkgt. 10c
 Figs, a basket 20c
 Seeded Prunes, a pkgt. 12c
 Corned Walnuts, a lb. 15c
 Fancy Walnuts, a lb. 20c
 Sultana Raisins 15c

Cut Price Specialties

Valencia Raisins, regular price 10c, a lb. 8c
 Mixed Nuts, regular price 20c, a lb. 15c
 Cleaned Currants, regular price 12, a package 10c
 Dates, regular price 5c, a package 4c
 Figs, regular price 10c, a b. x. 8c
 A. & P. Mince Meat, regular price 10c, a package 7c
 Malaga Grapes, regular price 15c, a lb. 10c
 Cranberries, regular price 12c, a quart. 10c

Seasonable Specialties

at lowest possible prices

"All Prepared" Plum Pudding 10c
 Franko-American Plum Pudding 10c
 Ind size 10c
 Franko-American Soups, Pints 16c
 Franko-American Soups, Quarts 20c
 Pecans, a lb. 15c
 Filberts, a lb. 15c
 Brazils, a lb. 15c
 Prunes 5, 8 & 10c
 Bell's Poultry Seasoning 10c
 Johnson's Mince Meat 5 lb. crock. 50c
 Johnson's Preserves, 5 lb. crock. 50c
 Johnson's Fruit Butters, 5 lb. crock. 30c
 Campbell's Soups, 3 cans 25c
 Tarragon Almonds, a lb. 18c
 Paper Shell Almonds, a lb. 25c

There is nothing more Refreshing and Satisfying than a cup of A. & P. Blend Golden-Tipped India-Ceylon Tea at 25c a 4-Lb., sealed packet. A Perfect Treat. Very soothing to the nerves.

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